

## Philosophy 2102: Introduction to Philosophy (Writing Intensive)

UNC Charlotte, Fall 2015

Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45am, Friday 122

**Instructor:** Trevor Pearce  
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Winningham 105B

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### Description

This class begins with the question, “How should we live?”—a question that has been asked in many forms by many people for many centuries. In the first part of the course, we will explore a series of answers to this question given by ancient Chinese and ancient Greek philosophers. Our discussion of ancient skepticism will lead into Part 2, focused on the source, nature, and reliability of our knowledge of the world around us. In Part 3, we will read the work of several thinkers who made philosophical arguments in support of political struggles—from Douglass on slavery to Wollstonecraft on women’s rights. Part 4 returns to ethics but in its more modern form. What makes actions right or wrong? What makes people good or bad? Finally, in the last part of the course, we will explore a set of philosophical questions relating to the role of science in policy choices. Throughout, we will critically reflect on that which is usually taken for granted, demanding evidence even for strongly held convictions. Philosophy, as Socrates said, often plays the role of a biting fly that awakens us from our slumber.

### Required Texts

Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Hackett, 2001) [ISBN # 9780872205543]

Nancy Cartwright & Jeremy Hardie, *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better* (Oxford University Press, 2012) [ISBN #9780199841622]  
(or online through the UNCC library at <http://goo.gl/TwoJd6>)

These books will be available for purchase at the university bookstore. All other texts will be available at the course website via <https://moodle2.uncc.edu/>.

## Evaluation

5%	Participation	
10%	Attendance	
20%	Summaries	<b>September 2 to December 9</b>
20%	Paper 1 (1200 ± 200 words; 35% draft, 65% final)	<b>September 20 &amp; October 4</b>
20%	Paper 2 (1200 ± 200 words; 35% draft, 65% final)	<b>November 1 &amp; November 15</b>
25%	Paper 3 (1200 ± 200 words; 100% final)	<b>December 18</b>

Your attendance grade is calculated by dividing attended classes by total classes. I automatically excuse two absences. Requests for additional excused absences due to medical emergencies, family emergencies, military orders, or court orders should be made to the Dean of Students Office ([http://unccdso.uncc.edu/academic\\_accommodations](http://unccdso.uncc.edu/academic_accommodations)), and not to me directly.

‘Participation’ means making comments and asking questions that reflect your having read and thought about the text under discussion. **Your participation grade cannot be higher than your attendance grade.** I often call on individual students following the small-group discussion or the summary write-up. **You must bring a copy of the reading to each class**, or you will not be able to effectively participate.

For the summaries, at the beginning of each class you will spend five minutes writing a paragraph that includes (a) the main claim or thesis of the reading for that day and (b) the arguments or evidence the author gives to support this claim or thesis. You may use books and notes. **I will collect and grade these summaries throughout the semester**, though not every class. If you arrive late, you must still hand in your summary at the same time as everyone else. Late summaries will not be accepted. Summaries submitted via e-mail will not be accepted. **Absence from class is not a valid excuse for not turning in a summary** unless you receive accommodation from the Dean of Students office (see above). The lowest summary grade will be dropped.

Topics for Papers 1-3 will be circulated by e-mail on September 14, October 26, and December 7, respectively. For the first two papers, the procedure is this: you will hand in a full draft on the first date; I will return it to you approximately one week later with comments and suggestions; you will hand in the revised paper in on the second date. I encourage you to talk to me about your paper before you submit the draft and/or before you submit the final version. I am happy to give feedback on outlines or introductory paragraphs. **The three papers (and drafts) must be submitted by 7pm on the due date at the Moodle 2 site via turnitin.com.** Papers that are too long or too short will be penalized a minimum of half a grade point. Late papers will be penalized half a grade point per day.

The use of cell phones, smart phones, or other mobile communication devices is disruptive, and is therefore prohibited during class except in emergencies. Students are permitted to use computers during class for note-taking and other class-related work only.

The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or by e-mail notice.

## University Policies

All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or at <http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>.

As a condition of taking this course, all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. No student papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com without a student's written consent and permission. If a student does not provide such written consent and permission, the instructor may: (i) require a short reflection paper on research methodology; (ii) require a draft bibliography prior to submission of the final paper; or (iii) require the cover page and first cited page of each reference source to be photocopied and submitted with the final paper.

Students who miss classes, examinations or other assignments because of a religious practice or belief must provide reasonable notice of the dates of religious observances on which they will be absent by submitting a Request for Religious Accommodation Form (<http://goo.gl/I1Ncv0>) to the instructor prior to September 4, 2015.

Students in this course seeking accommodations to disabilities must first consult with the Office of Disability Services (<https://ds.uncc.edu/>) and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations.

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## Reading Schedule

Aug. 26 – **Reasons and Argument**

No reading

### PART 1: WAYS OF LIFE

Aug. 31 – **Goodness**

Confucius, *Analects*, Books 1-10 (excerpts), trans. Slingerland, pp. 1-30 of *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Ivanhoe & Van Norden (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2005).  
[~530-480 BCE]

**Sep. 2 – Care & Luxury**

Mozi, “Inclusive Care (III)” and “Condemning Music (I),” from *The Essential Mòzǐ*, trans. Fraser, unpublished draft. [~460-390 BCE]

**Sep. 9 – Piety**

Plato, *Euthyphro*, pp. 1-19 of *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, trans. Grube & Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000). [~399-387 BCE]

**Sep. 14 – Truth & Ignorance**

Plato, *Apology*, pp. 20-42 of *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, trans. Grube & Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000). [~399-387 BCE]

**Sep. 16 – Law**

Plato, *Crito*, pp. 43-54 of *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, trans. Grube & Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000). [~399-387 BCE]

**Sep. 21 – The Good**

Plato, [Sun, Line, Cave], pp. 200-230 of *Republic*, trans. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004). [~380-360 BCE]

**Sep. 23 – Virtue**

Aristotle, “Book 2,” pp. 18-30 of *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999). [~360-322 BCE]

**Sep. 28 – Epicureanism**

Epicurus, “Letter to Menoeceus [excerpt]” and “Principal Doctrines,” trans. Bailey, pp. 30-39 of *The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers*, ed. Oates (New York: Random House, 1940). [~320-270 BCE]

Lucretius, [Death is Nothing to Us], pp. 89-98 of *On the Nature of Things*, trans. Smith (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001). [~75-40 BCE]

**Sep. 30 – Stoicism**

Seneca, *Moral Letters to Lucilius*, “Letter 71” & “Letter 76,” pp. 25-39 of *Selected Philosophical Letters*, trans. Inwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). [~62-65 CE]

Epictetus, *The Discourses*, Book 1, §§1-2, pp. 5-11 of *Discourses and Selected Writings*, trans. Dobbin (Penguin, 2008). [~108 CE]

**Oct. 5 – Scepticism**

Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*, Book 1, §§1-13 & §15, pp. 3-12 & 40-43 of *Outlines of Scepticism*, trans. Annas & Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). [~180-210 CE]

## **PART 2: MIND, KNOWLEDGE, REALITY**

### **Oct. 7 – Doubt**

René Descartes, “First Meditation” and “Second Meditation,” pp. 12-23 of *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Cottingham, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). [1641]

Oct. 14 – Class Cancelled

### **Oct. 19 – Soul & Body**

René Descartes and Elisabeth of Bohemia, [Soul and Body], pp. 61-73 of *The Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and René Descartes*, trans. Shapiro (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). [1643]

### **Oct. 21 – Identity**

John Locke, “Of Identity and Diversity,” pp. 328-348 of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). [1689]

### **Oct. 26 – Causation & Induction**

David Hume, “Sceptical Doubts” and “Sceptical Solution” [excerpt], pp. 24-39 of *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Beauchamp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). [1748]

## **PART 3: POLITICAL STRUGGLES**

### **Oct. 28 – Women**

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, “Chapter 2,” pp. 84-104 of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). [1792]

### **Nov. 2 – Slavery**

Frederick Douglass, “The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro,” pp. 188-206 of *Selected Speeches and Writings* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 1999). [1852]

### **Nov. 4 – The Other**

Simone de Beauvoir, “Introduction,” pp. 3-17 of *The Second Sex*, trans. Borde and Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage, 2011). [1949]

### **Nov. 9 – Gender**

Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution,” *Theatre Journal* 40 (1988): 519-531.

### **Nov. 11 – Race**

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” *The Atlantic* (21 May 2014), online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

## **PART 4: ETHICS & MORALITY**

### **Nov. 16 – Kantian Ethics**

Christine Korsgaard, “The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 15 (1986): 325-349.

### **Nov. 18 – Utilitarianism**

Philippa Foot, “Utilitarianism and the Virtues,” *Mind* 94 (1985): 196-209.

### **Nov. 23 – Moral Responsibility**

Michele Moody-Adams, “Culture, Responsibility, and Affected Ignorance,” *Ethics* 104 (1994): 291-309.

### **Nov. 30 – Aliens**

Octavia Butler, “Bloodchild,” pp. 3-32 of *Bloodchild and Other Stories* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1995). [1984]

## **PART 5: SCIENCE & POLICY**

### **Dec. 2 – Evidence-Based Policy I**

Nancy Cartwright & Jeremy Hardie, *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better* (Oxford University Press, 2012), Part 1

### **Dec. 7 – Evidence-Based Policy II**

Nancy Cartwright & Jeremy Hardie, *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better* (Oxford University Press, 2012), Parts 2-3

### **Dec. 9 – Evidence-Based Policy III**

Nancy Cartwright & Jeremy Hardie, *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better* (Oxford University Press, 2012), Parts 4-5